

In the claims:

1. (currently amended) A device for compressing the chest of a patient during cardiopulmonary resuscitation, wherein the chest is characterized by the sternum of the patient and areas lateral to the sternum, said device comprising:

a band adapted to extend around the chest of the patient;

a driver mechanism, operably connected to the band, for contracting the band;

a fluid-filled cushion disposed between the chest of the patient and the band, with at least a portion of said cushion disposed over the sternum of the patient said cushion extending over the sternum of the patient and being limited in the lateral extent to the anterior portion of the patient's thorax; and

an automatic controller for controlling operation of the driver mechanism;

wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to contract the band at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;

wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to contract the band to a tightness sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

2. (currently amended) A device for compressing the chest of a patient during cardiopulmonary resuscitation, wherein the chest is characterized by the sternum of the patient and areas lateral to the sternum, said device comprising:

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a band adapted to extend around the chest of the patient, the band having a plurality of fluid-receiving cells disposed along the length of the band;

a driver mechanism, operably connected to the band, for inflating the fluid-receiving cells;

a cushion adapted to translate to the patient's chest an amount of force sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation disposed between the chest of the patient and the band, ~~with at least a portion of said cushion disposed over the sternum of the patient~~ said cushion extending over the sternum of the patient and being limited in the lateral extent to the anterior portion of the patient's thorax; and

an automatic controller for controlling operation of the driver mechanism;

wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to inflate the fluid-receiving cells at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;

wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to inflate the fluid-receiving cells to a pressure sufficient to ~~contract~~ shorten and lengthen the circumference the band to a tightness sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

3. (original) The device of claim 2, wherein the cushion is a sealed cushion.
4. (original) The device of claim 2, wherein the band is comprised of an inelastic material.

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5. (previously presented) The device of claim 2, wherein the plurality of fluid-receiving cells are in fluid communication with each other.

6. (original) The device of claim 5, wherein the cushion is a sealed cushion.

7. (original) The device of claim 5, wherein the band is comprised of an inelastic material.

8. (canceled)

9. (canceled)

10. (canceled)

11. (canceled)

12. (canceled)

13. (canceled)

14. (canceled)

15. (canceled)

16. (canceled)

17. (canceled)

18. (canceled)

19. (currently amend) A method of compressing the chest of a patient during cardiopulmonary resuscitation, wherein the chest is characterized by the sternum of the patient and areas lateral to the sternum, said method comprising the steps of:

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providing a device for compressing the chest of a patient, said device comprising:

a band adapted to extend around the chest of the patient;

a driver mechanism, operably connected to the band, for contracting the band;

a fluid-filled cushion, said cushion extending over the sternum of the patient and being limited in the lateral extent to the anterior portion of the patient's thorax sized and dimensioned to cover substantially the entire anterior portion of the chest of the patient, including the sternum of the patient; and

an automatic controller for controlling operation of the driver mechanism;

wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to contract the band at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;

wherein the controller is programmed to contract the band to a tightness sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;

placing the cushion on the anterior portion of the chest of the patient such that the cushion substantially covers the sternum of the patient;

securing the band around the chest of the patient and over the cushion; and

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contracting the band to compress the chest of the patient to a tightness and at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation on the patient.

20. (canceled)

21. (canceled)

22. (currently amended) A device for compressing the chest of a patient during cardiopulmonary resuscitation, wherein the chest is characterized by the sternum of the patient and areas lateral to the sternum, said device comprising:

a band adapted to extend around the chest of the patient;

a driver mechanism, operably connected to the band, for shortening and lengthening the band;

a fluid-filled cushion disposed between the chest of the patient and the band, ~~with at least a portion of said cushion disposed over the sternum of the patient~~ said cushion extending over the sternum of the patient and being limited in the lateral extent to the anterior portion of the patient's thorax; and

an automatic controller for controlling operation of the driver mechanism;

wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to rotate a cylinder and cause the band to shorten and lengthen at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;

wherein the band, when shortened to a sufficient tightness, performs cardiopulmonary resuscitation by compressing the

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sternum through the fluid-filled cushion towards a spine of the patient.

23. (currently amended) A device for compressing the chest of a patient during cardiopulmonary resuscitation, wherein the chest is characterized by the sternum of the patient and areas lateral to the sternum, said device comprising:

a band adapted to extend around the chest of the patient wherein a continuous portion of the band extends over the sternum and areas lateral to the sternum;

a driver mechanism, operably connected to the band, for shortening and lengthening the band;

a translating mechanism cushion disposed between the chest of the patient and the band, with at least a portion of said translating mechanism disposed over the sternum of the patient said cushion extending over the sternum of the patient and being limited in the lateral extent to the anterior portion of the patient's thorax; and

an automatic controller for controlling operation of the driver mechanism;

wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to cause the band to shorten and lengthen at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;

24. (previously presented) The device of claim 23 wherein the translating mechanism comprises a substantially non-compressible fluid.

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25. (currently amended) The device of claim 23 wherein the ~~translating mechanism~~ a cushion comprises a moldable cushion adapted to translate radial forces from the band to the chest of the patient whereby increasing the concentration of anterior radial forces acting on the anterior portion of the patient's thorax.

26. (previously presented) The device of claim 23 wherein the drive mechanism comprises a longitudinal shaft coupled to the band.

27. (new) A device for compressing the chest of a patient during cardiopulmonary resuscitation, wherein the chest is characterized by the sternum of the patient and areas lateral to the sternum, said device comprising:

a band adapted to extend around the chest of the patient;

a driver mechanism, operably connected to the band, for winding and unwinding the band;

a fluid-filled cushion disposed between the chest of the patient and the band, with at least a portion of said cushion disposed over the sternum of the patient; and

an automatic controller for controlling operation of the driver mechanism;

wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to wind and unwind the band at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;

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wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to wind the band to a tightness sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

28. (new) The device of claim 27, wherein the cushion is a sealed cushion.

29. (new) The device of claim 27, wherein the band is comprised of an inelastic material.